



GARDEN HOSE into GAS MASKS



... PART OF THE

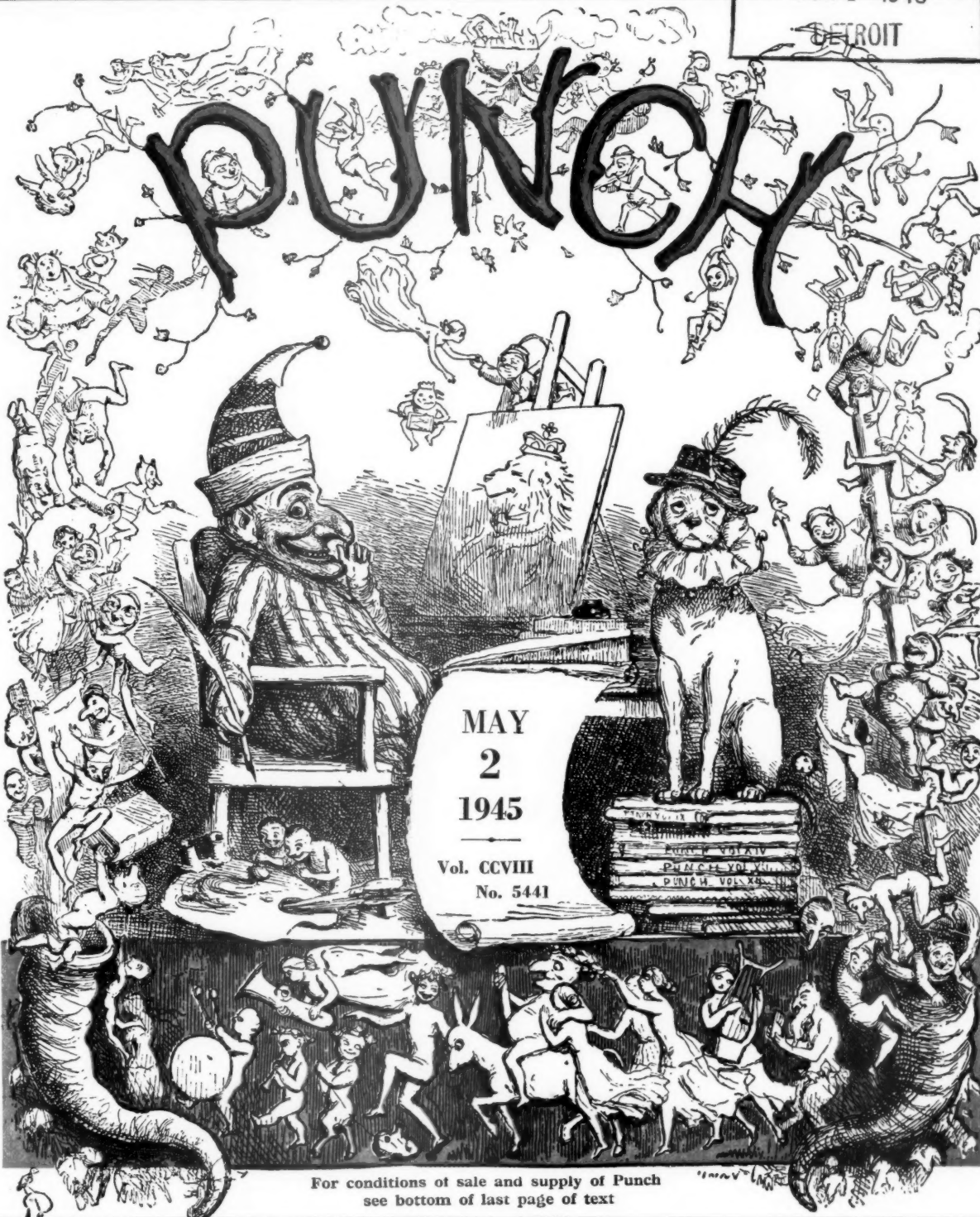
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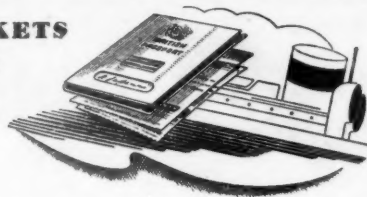
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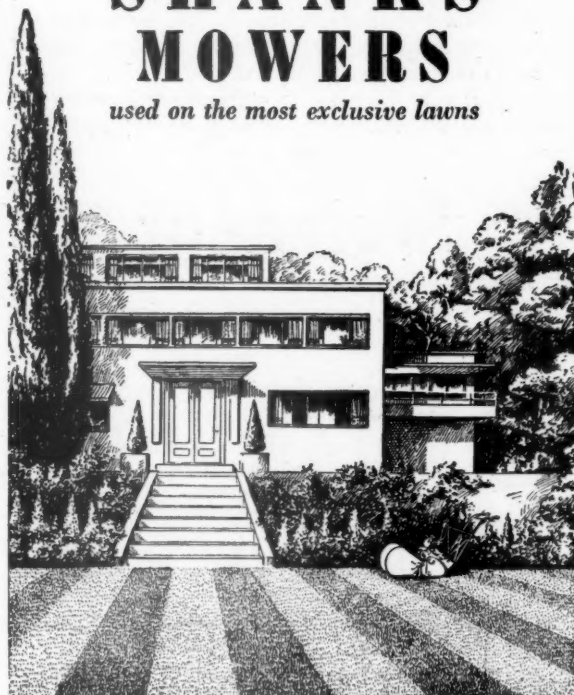
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Sleeplessness,
Rheumatism,
Colds and 'Flu:
like them, it can be relieved
safely and speedily by two
tablets of 'Genasprin' taken
in a little water.

Toothache is a danger signal
that should never be dis-
regarded: a healthy tooth
does not ache. 'Genasprin'
will not remove the cause of
the ache—that is a matter for
your dentist—but it will relieve
your pain until you can con-
sult him. 'Genasprin' will also
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the extraction of a tooth. And
because it soothes the whole
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It would not only do away with all
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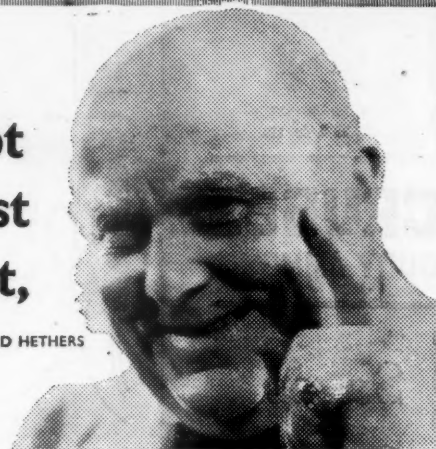


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N/LH

Not
just
yet,

says OLD HETHERS



can we afford to take it easy, though better times are approaching. With peace will come the return to the shops of many old and well-tried favourites, Robinson's Lemon Barley Water among them. Meanwhile make your barley water from Robinson's 'Patent' Barley—you'll find it good.

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ROBINSON'S
'Patent' BARLEY

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for
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PUNCH

or

The London Charivari



Vol. CCVIII No. 5441

May 2 1945

Charivaria

HIKERS have begun to appear again, but holiday transport is so scarce that there isn't much hope of their being put back on the old mobile basis this year.

A critic comments that Hollywood seems adept at producing the sort of film that gets a Britisher's back up. Especially when he happens to be sitting in front of us.



"Japanese statesmen find it hard to believe that they are losing the war," we are told. Nevertheless they are fast resigning themselves.

An American visitor says he recently saw in the middle of a ploughed field a scarecrow clad in old plus-fours. It was more likely a pensive golfer meditating on the scene of his former triumphs.

A vegetarian hiker in Essex was chased by a bull which apparently wouldn't stop to listen.

"The letter pointed out that the supply of demons was very short, whereas there were definite allocations of oranges from time to time."—*Northants paper*.

Not much compensation, is it?

Hitler has issued so many last-ditch orders that his friends are afraid he has got into a rut.

The Germans are planning to launch an increasing number of pockets.

Thefts are increasing on the railways. Especially if you include the cases of people taking other people's seats.

A German prisoner in this country gets twice as much food as a British civilian. In all fairness, however, it must be admitted that the German prisoner doesn't get a gratuity, either.

"... The music will include 'A Shropshire Lady.'" *Oxford paper*.

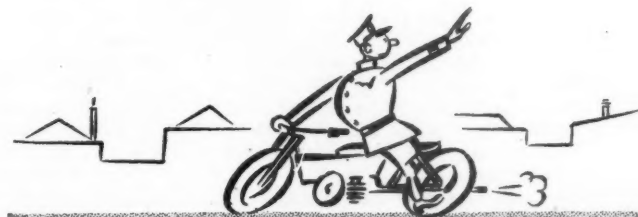
By A. E. Houswoman?

In this swift mechanized war generals don't wear spurs even when riding spirited Whitehall lifts.

Farming experts have just proved that deep digging does not always give the best results. As any lumbago enthusiast will agree.

Germany's last pocket battleship has been sunk. This is where she came in.

A man was fined for carrying three people on his bicycle beside himself. No notice was taken of his plea that he thought public ownership had arrived.



Bad Hatter

THE ribbon on my black civilian hat has been under review. It may or may not be premature at this stage to plan the rehabilitation of one's peace-time hat; the Government has given no guidance on this point. But if, as I suspect, the authorities are content to leave it to the good sense and judgment of the ordinary man to decide comparatively minor matters of this sort, then my own judgment comes down heavily in favour of rehabilitation without further delay.

The ribbon on my hat is frayed. In the Army we should say that with respect to my hat the ribbon is in a frayed condition, which means the same thing but has the additional advantage of showing that the writer has had a good education. We should also (in the Army) put this piece of information under the heading of "INFORMATION," except that we should abbreviate the word to INFM on the principle that as we are going to use twelve words where one would do just as well, we may as well use four letters where eleven would do rather better. The point of putting "INFM" at the top of a piece of infm is that it clarifies sequence of thought and expression, which is a splendid thing to do.

I am upset about the frayed condition of my ribbon. This is still infm, actually, and comes under a sort of sub-heading called "OWN TPS," but never mind about that. The point is that my distress was so keen when I observed the extent to which fraying had set in that I decided (here comes what we like to call the INTENTION—not, as you might expect, the INTN) to lay the whole matter before a hatter. The hatter I chose was, not to beat about the bush, the hatter who originally supplied me with, or issued, the hat. A man who in his day understood hats.

I went to this hatter, opened my week-end bag and laid my hat on a glass-topped case.

"INFM," I said.

"Sir?" said the hatter.

"No matter," I said, being disinclined to bandy words with a non-military man. "What can you do about this hat?"

He took it up and scrutinized the crown. He grasped the brim in both hands and with a sort of shuffling movement caused the hat to rotate rapidly about its vertical

axis. Then he tipped it over and peered, as I had feared he might, inside. His face, I am sorry to say, wore the doom-ridden look of a soothsayer inspecting the entrails of a particularly unfavourable bird.

"Too far gone, isn't it," he said at last.

"What the devil do you mean by that?" I asked, with dangerous politeness. To tell the truth I was a good deal annoyed. As far as I could see there was nothing wrong with the hat whatever, apart from this frayed ribbon. Of course if one goes poking and peering about in a 1936 hat it is easy enough to find a stitch loose here, a piece of candle-grease there. But where's the point of it? Dentists have the same stupid way of disregarding the tiny hole one is trying to indicate to them and prodding about in search of huge cavities on the other side of the mouth. And, come to think of it, they use exactly the same form of words as this impudent hatter.

"There is practically nothing wrong with respect to this hat," I told him, "except the ribbon, at which, I notice, you failed to look. It is in a frayed condition. If you will have the goodness to deploy a new ribbon I will pay you your fee and go."

"Deploy?" he echoed. The fool.

"It is a military term, meaning to put into position, to install, to—well more strictly, of course it means to disperse to battle-stations, though in this instance—"

"Sir?"

"Look," I said. "Be a good chap and fix a new ribbon on that hat, will you?"

"We are most anxious to do anything we can," he said. "Naturally."

"Good."

"But it will be some little time, sir."

I looked at my watch. "I've got half an hour to spare," I said.

"I fear it will not be possible under three to four months, sir."

The reader may well suppose this to be a flight of imagination on my part—or with respect to me, as I would rather say—but it is not. I am prepared to lay my hand on The Field Service Pocket Book and swear that it is true.

"Three to four months!" I cried. "To fix a ribbon?"

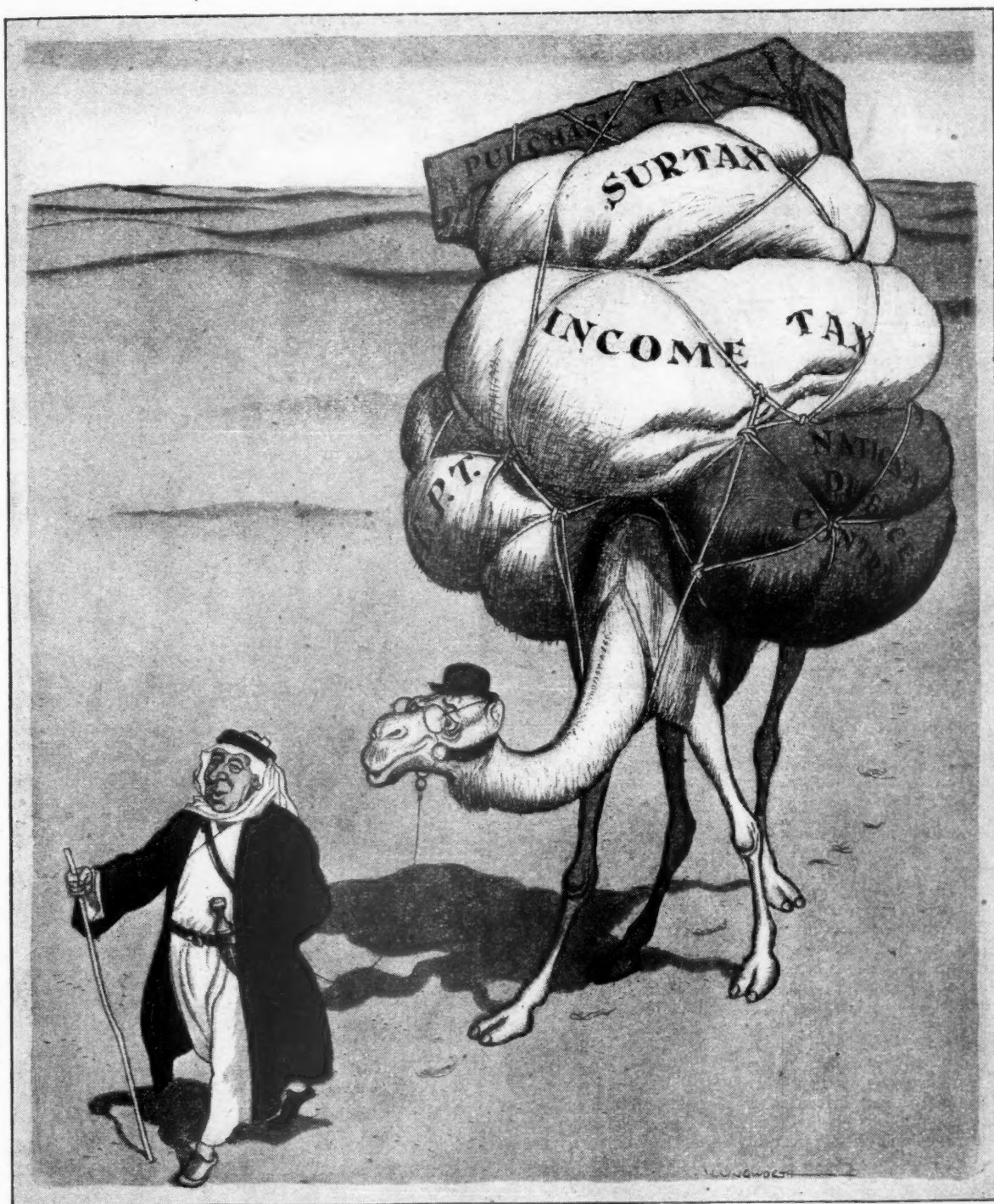
"And thoroughly clean."

"My dear hatter," I said, "I can and will clean the hat myself in ten minutes should I think it necessary. All I am asking you to do is to replace a ribbon which, in my opinion, is in a frayed condition. You have a large and airy shop here and, I do not doubt, additional accommodation at the rear of the building in which a task of this nature could be carried out without inconvenience or overcrowding. There can be no labour problems, as your three assistants idling about over there in the glove department abundantly prove. Be so good then as to oblige an old customer by affixing a new ribbon to this hat IMMEDIATELY. Signed, Major, G.S., for Major-General, General Staff."

He explained that no stocks of ribbon were held in the establishment. "The hat will have to be sent away," he said, "and take its place on a long waiting list. We have really more work than we can cope with in our repair workrooms, with the reduced staff and the difficulties of obtaining materials, and so on. I am afraid I cannot promise you your hat in under three months."

A disheartening vision came to me of hundreds and hundreds of hats waiting patiently in an enormous queue,





THE CONSTANT CAMEL

"Come along—in a few months' time we may see the mirage of an oasis."

Anton



"I shall celebrate Victory-day by switching over to asparagus."

some with battered crowns, some disorganized as to their brims, others, again, requiring restitching action with respect to the lining, and at the very end of the queue my own black beauty ready for action in all respects except, as stated in the above paragraphs, for the frayed condition of its ribbon. I put my hat back in the bag.

"I am far from satisfied," I said, "that you have extended full co-operation to me in this matter. I consider that three months is an utterly unreasonable time for a straightforward first echelon repair of this kind. I take the view that you could not care less whether my hat is ever fully serviceable again or not. Very well then, I shall buy no more hats in this shop. When the war is over I shall buy my hats elsewhere. I shall buy a great many hats elsewhere. I shall make a point of increasing my income by every possible means in order to be able to buy hats continually and not buy them in this shop. I am determined to make myself, by hook or by crook, the best customer you have ever lost. You will live to rue this day's work. Good day to you."

He made no reply.

"Acknowledge!" I said sharply.

"Oh, push off," he said; and feeling suddenly tired of his company (or Coy, as we say in the Army) off I pushed.

H. F. E.

Sonnet XC

To the onlie begetter of the insuing sonnet

Mr. H. M.

all happinesse

NO longer at thy too-long-shadow'd pane
 Admit impediments. Light is hot light
 That by its owne extinction shines in vain,
 And holds his bountie from the unthrift night.
 That stern decree which vayed thine amber sparke
 While six blacke winters did besiege thy brow,
 And sever'd darke from light and light from darke
 Enjoyns thee, now repeal'd, to joyn them now.
 Then let thy blind no more thy beacon blind
 When I to thee-ward from my travells come,
 And I, who once had lost, shall safely find
 That once-benighted waye which leads me home;
 Thy lampe my guiding star, my midnight sun,
 In whose sweete beames both daye and night are one.

Toller Applies

To the Sure-Fire School of Journalism

SIRS,—With reference to the suggestion made in your last letter that my talents were better fitted to free-lance fiction work than to straight journalism, I have studied the brochures and leaflets on this subject with great interest and am willing to embark on a literary career of this sort which, as you point out, would be on a higher level than newspaper reporting and might possibly lead to fame in the artistic world, although I shall refrain as advised from buying motor-cars and villas at the first sign of success since I also recall the hard life of Sir Walter Scott after similar imprudence.

I shall not be starting entirely from scratch in this sphere and I would be glad to confirm that the following precepts still hold good in the modern market, these being noted during a previous period of literary ambition from various authorities on the subject and preserved by some happy chance in a S.O. Book 136a still in my kit-bag.

(1) "Amuse the great British public. Cheer it up. Chat to it. Tickle its funny bone. Giggle with it. Give it, now and again, a good cry. It loves that."

(2) "Very few periodicals admit anything morbid or offensive. Writers like Hardy, who have a drear, hopeless outlook on life, are not welcome in popular magazines."

(3) "Readers don't want gloom but something to brighten life. The sun must be always shining. Treat sex reverently and avoid its unsavoury aspects."

(4) "Write it for children to read."

Reinspired by these maxims, and by the School literature kindly forwarded, I have, as required, written a specimen story incorporating as many ingredients of success as possible and duly avoiding the topic of war as "distasteful," a ruling with which I agree and the factor chiefly allowing the work to be done since we are at the moment busily engaged in cracking about the plains of Northern Germany and anything extra could not be taken on unless it offered a few moments of relief from military matters.

Thus I must apologize that the manuscript is in pencil on the back of German forms having presumably to do with the management of the Boche

supply dump the amenities of which the Troop borrowed two nights ago and which unfortunately did not include lighting, so that the narrative was composed by the flicker of a candle and must consequently compare rather badly with the submissions of other students.

In other ways, too, I am afraid *Hearts Aflame*—a title inspired by the behaviour of a nearby building and the paragraph "Zippy Titles"—must fall short of the high literary standard set by the School, since, on re-reading, I detect the influence, almost amounting to plagiarism, of a paper-covered work in which the driver of my armoured car is apparently more interested than he is in the imminent downfall of Germany; this work, which continually gets mixed up with the rations and ammunition and has several times narrowly escaped being fed into the Besa, becoming common vehicle property so that we are all three at different stages in the story of Rosa and her excitements in the Rockies, my gunner going so far as to take on himself the mantle of a principal character on whose behalf he fires the Besa with all the vim of a Winchester repeater and with expletives in the necessary Canadian accent.

Having regard, however, to the requirements of the Women's Two-penny Market as laid down in the School's brochure, *Hearts Aflame*, though set in sunny Canada and at times, I fear, in exactly these scenes, avoids the bluntness of representation by which Rosa is depicted as suffering a long kiss from the lone hunter who has not seen a woman for five years—this is the rôle assumed by my gunner largely on that qualification—and it will in fact be noted that the only salute of this sort allowed occurs in the last sentence, despite the engagement, tiff and re-engagement between Flora and Lord Frederick, thus complying with the paragraph "Sex Does Not Exist."

The Canadian setting is further not entirely plagiaristic since this was a part of the world visited by my Uncle Lionel during an early period of what my aunt alludes to when necessary as "those disgraceful cruises," but which in reality my uncle undertook blamelessly and perforce as a working member

of the crew with no time for philandering in evening dress under the moon with American heiresses as my aunt insinuates before taking the first opportunity to skate beyond the subject, this period accounting for the Statue of Liberty on his chest which is the reason for my aunt's dislike of seaside holidays; while the big scene in which Lord Frederick reveals his feelings has its root in an actual invitation to my uncle, after he had established himself in society with a hot-dog stand and a branch peanut barrow, to partake, with other English personnel, in a Wompi hunt with lanterns and sticks, guests beating bushes and giving the prescribed love-call up to 3 A.M., when it was discovered the hosts had gone to bed at eleven and locked their door; being, however, ducked in the lake the next morning, although the twist is my own by which Lord Frederick's wig floats off in the confusion and discloses his age to be nearer sixty than forty, thus creating a giggle as recommended above and the problem for Flora's heart which is the crux of the story.

Apart from other faults no doubt apparent to you in the story's construction, I am conscious that the character of Flora herself, no doubt through inexperience and my inability to profit from further lessons on "Character Building," and "Do Your Bodies Breathe?" is at times uncertain since I midway in the narrative (owing to the candle failing simultaneously with the return of a patrol) lost inspiration for this heroine, subsequently changing her eyes from blue to hazel and her character from a bouncing tom-boy to an enigmatic girl interested in art, this in turn calling for changes in description of dress and speech so that I all but forsook the task and was compelled to go outside and calm down in the company of gun-flashes and the drone of our bombers going over.

I look forward, possibly during the period of occupation preceding my demobilization under the Age and Service Group Scheme, to a more concentrated study of the School's teaching with a view to taking some small place in contemporary English literature after the war. Should, by chance, *Hearts Aflame* be rated higher than my own estimate of its value, I would, with reference to the paragraph "Fortunes from Hollywood," take this opportunity of reserving all film rights.

Yours faithfully,

B.L.A.

J. TOLLER, Lt.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

The Memoirs of Mipsie

By Blanche Addle of Eigg

XI—From Red Sea to Black Treachery

AT Aden Mipsie left the comparative comfort of her luxury liner and boldly embarked, entirely alone save for her secretary and courier, Major Hardup, her personal maid, and the Captain and little crew of twenty, on the beautiful steam yacht which had been lent her by a friend for the remainder of her trip.

Their first objective was Uassa Land, that picturesque little colony just above Eritrea which is ruled over by a line of Merchant Princes whose traditional generosity is only equalled by their devotion to England. It was these splendid qualities which appealed to my sister and which prompted her to ask Major Hardup, whom she met on the boat, and who had had considerable experience in native parts, to arrange the tour for her. He gladly accepted, enchained by her beauty at once, and also most grateful for the generous remuneration which she offered him, for he was on half-pay with no private money, poor man. It is terrible to think there are such cases of hardship amongst British officers.

Mipsie's vivid journal describes their journey from Port Maggot on the Red Sea, up the famous Red Mite gorges to Nojoko, the capital.

"The sunrise here at four o'clock, spreading deep crimson and purple lights over the rocks, an unforgettable sight, the description of which made a deep impression on me as Major Hardup gave it at breakfast on my *crumpet* (hotel verandah) five hours later. I hastily swallowed coffee and *jim-jams* (native rolls) and caught the only train in the day, which leaves at 10 A.M. As it is too hot to travel after 10.30 we left the train at Badeg and waited for our *skivvi-bog* (procession of servants on donkeys) to catch up with us. All round us were wonderful flowering eggs, while brilliant yellow flying adders zoomed overhead. 'They are attracted by your face powder,' Major Hardup explained, 'but are quite harmless.'

"The natives will trade anything for toothpicks. We brought several thousand with us and purchased a good supply of *nitties*—a kind of banana-shaped pineapple, and plentiful *oompahs*—a delicious pineapple, looking and tasting exactly like a banana. Also emu's eggs and several bottles of *tick*—the native fiery wine

which the better caste tribes drink before killing their grandmothers—a regular custom on Friday nights at sundown. At Skrewi we were fortunate enough to see a native wedding, which was most interesting. The bride is entirely swathed in pampas gauze, while the bridegroom is clothed only in gourds, which are hung round him in such profusion that he can hardly move. While the villagers beat the *chummi* (a rude kind of gong) the local maidens slowly unwind the veiling, and the bridegroom's friends, in a kind of leaping dance, remove his gourds one by one. It was thrilling to watch, and I found myself longing to take part, but Major Hardup said it would be a riot, so firmly removed me, alas, before the ceremony was completed. I was told that the bride is usually so scratched by the pampas gauze and the bridegroom so bruised by the gourds that they are frequently unable to meet again for weeks. Divorce is very prevalent in Uassa Land."

At Nojoko Mipsie was met by Ras Bollinogud's servants and conducted with great ceremony to his palace. Here a bitter disappointment awaited her. Ever since she had arrived in Uassa she had been under the protection of the Prince, who had frequently intimidated, in letters and through his agents, that a gift worthy of an English duchess awaited her at the capital. On the palace steps she was handed a paper listing "the gift." "200 fat black sheep, 100 *yonghi* (the local blue oxen, born mad, considered a great delicacy when eaten raw) 50 alligators' hides, 1 cwt. of incense and 10 jars of snake oil." It was, from Ras Bollinogud's viewpoint, doubtless the most generous present, but to my sister it was naturally a blow, she having expected something more portable and utilitarian, like precious stones or gold. However, with her unfailing good manners she thanked the Prince for his favour—then, with one of her impetuous gestures of reckless generosity, she turned to Major Hardup. "These are for you," she said in French. "Your salary for the trip." So overcome was her secretary by the gift—which was of course worth many times his due—that he had to sit down and ask for brandy. Indeed, he did not completely recover his equilibrium till they had left

Nojoko and were on their return journey to Port Maggot. Then suddenly, while sipping their coffee outside a little *bumbar* (very homely estaminet) he surprised Mipsie by springing to his feet and exclaiming, with fear in his eyes as he spoke the words: "We must get to the coast as soon as possible. Ras Bollinogud will be furious at our leaving his gifts behind, which is considered a grave insult to a host. We are in great danger." The warning of Ras Bollinogud's treachery came too late. When Mipsie turned her horrified gaze to the little village square behind her it was to see a crowd of natives approaching, their *pokos* (four-edged spears) gleaming in the sunlight, murder in their faces.

It was a terrible moment. Major Hardup, who to do him justice was ready to pay with his life for his unforgivable lapse, immediately sprang to Mipsie's side. But where blood is blue hearts are stout. She pushed him impatiently aside and standing to her full height, faced the angry people, holding in her hand an empty envelope.

"I have here," she said in clarion tones, "a letter to our Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey. Beside me" (and she pointed with a firm hand) "is a pillar box. Unless you go quietly to your homes I shall post this letter, and in less than two months the entire British Army will come to my aid, and you and your wives and children will be annihilated."

The threat worked. The fire died out of their eyes and there was a great hush over the square. Then suddenly, a handsome young Uassan sprang up beside Mipsie.

"Three cheers for the Duchess and the British Foreign Office," he shouted—and the little town rang with loyal cries.

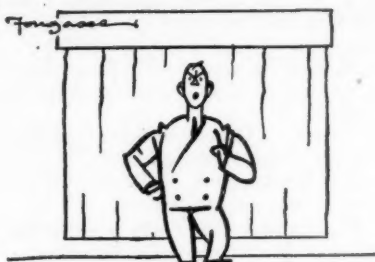
Thus was the situation saved by a woman's courage and the world-wide respect commanded by the British aristocracy and the British Constitution. M. D.

Almost in Conference

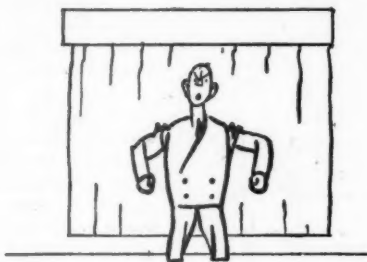
(From our Special Correspondent)

SAN FRANCISCO, TUESDAY. I am writing this on my knee in a little café up in the forward area. The café is called "Joe's Place." It is what we, in England, like to think the Americans call a drug store.* At the

*I mean this quite literally. I am not trying to suggest that the Americans don't call it a drug store. The Conference must go on.



1940. "When this confounded black-out is ended I'm going to tear down every blind and curtain in the house and make a bonfire in the middle of the road."



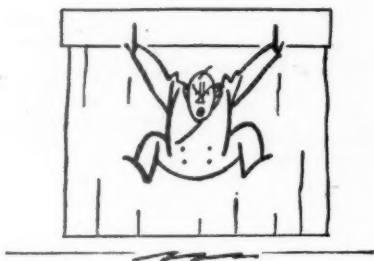
1941. "When this accursed black-out is over I'm going up on the roof and I'm going to let off all the fireworks and flares and fog-signals that money can buy."



1942. "When this filthy black-out finishes I'm going straight round to the Wardens' Post, and I'm going to set fire to it and dance round the flames all night."



1943. "When this horrible black-out is lifted I'm going to get up a torch-light procession up and down the High Street, and I'm going to roast a fireguard whole in front of the Town Hall."



1944. "When this foul black-out finally goes I'm going to open every window and turn on every light, and I'm going to go round to every house in the Square and ring the bell and shout 'Put that light on!'"



1945. "Yes, it's really very nice to see the end of the black-out."

moment the Americans have little opportunity to call it anything. They are hopelessly outnumbered.

The forty-six nations are not so much represented here as here in substance. Food supplies in the city are said to be sufficient for one month. To-day I saw several members of the Security Council consulting their maps. Chicago is mentioned as a possible next move should nomadism become necessary.

Forty-six nations do not, as some of my colleagues have suggested, mean forty-six different languages. But they mean quite enough languages to cause considerable confusion among the natives. Half an hour ago, while I was brushing cigarette ash from my waistcoat, I looked up to see a waiter studying me intently. Suddenly his eyes flashed with understanding and he rushed up to me carrying a plate of "hat dawgs" (I think). He smiled sympathetically, pointed to his mouth

and said: "You, *vous*, hungry, nein? Eatum plenty, pliz."

I was too astonished to reply coherently. But I ate the dawgs. They were swell.

When the waiter returned with the bill I was going through my pockets for a pipe-cleaner. He gazed in horror at the two yellow cloakroom tickets that I held between my teeth. Then he swallowed hard and grinned. "No pay, m'soo," he said. "You guest of Americanos. Uniteed Nations, no?"

His parting smile was a brilliant effort. Had I declared my nationality he would have been terribly embarrassed, I am sure. He spoke faultless English to the girl at the next table. The Americans are a fine generous people, but I must, for my conscience's sake, take care that there is no ash on my waistcoat at breakfast to-morrow.

Yesterday a wave of optimism swept over the city. It has been compared in the local press with the tremendous

'quake of 1906. It began when three members of the Economic Council were seen gleefully boarding a bus for Hollywood, and it reached its height when two thousand and seventeen assorted interpreters were induced by a recording company to sing "Accentuate the Positive" in close harmony.

I spoke to one of the delegates this morning. "We are not here for pleasure," he said, "though of course we do not intend to waste any opportunities. We are here to outlaw war. We shall not be satisfied until the whole world thinks that our international police force is wonderful."

Substantial progress has already been achieved, I hear. There have been rumours all day that a spirit of mutual confidence prevails and that the conference is well attended.

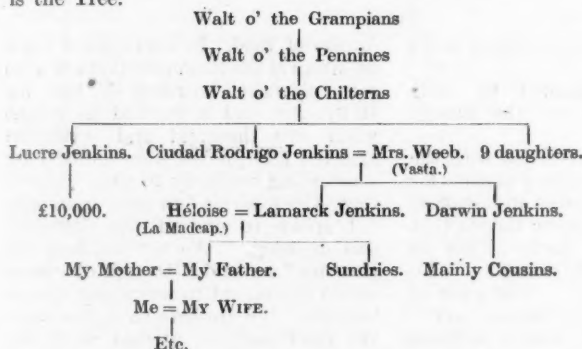
Apart from these items, very little hard news has emerged. But who knows what the morrow may bring? Hod.



"He's the chap in the Post-War Planning Section who keeps rushing in and out borrowing my rubber."

H. J.'s Dramatic Fragments

THE next Fragment was wrought to fill up a brochure containing our Family Tree, as this did not consume the minimum space for which our printers would print, stiff-necked and domineering being what they were on account of having once printed a First Edition. Here is the Tree.



INSIDE THE ELECTRON: AN INDICTMENT

(The scene is a race-course.)

SAM AND SON. Ickle Gee Gee, five to four. Jessica's Second Thoughts, evens. Equus Celerrimus, no reasonable offer refused.

JOLLITY JOHNSON. Patronize the old firm. Free advice service for clients. Annual audit.

GWLADYS THE BOOK. Discount for cash. Bonus on Jonesy Bach.

SIR OTTO PARKER. Wait till you see my new jockey, a real discovery. He was a policeman when I found him, but I got him interested in yoga and now he is only four stone two.

LORD PLAICE. I wish there was something for my nag to jump. It never gets its second wind until its hoofs are off the ground.

THE STARTER. Fall in now. The course is straight ahead, bearing left at the band, then down the Fairway to the winning post; it's marked "W.P." in blue paint. On your marks, one, two and away.

CROWD. They're off. Popacatapetl leads. It's dropping behind. It's last. Its shoes are coming off.

UN DUC. Vite! Vite! Ving-t-neuf Septembre.

CROWD. Horse Belisha wins.

SIR OTTO PARKER. But I nobbled it myself after lunch.

LORD PLAICE. What did you use?

SIR OTTO PARKER. Some stuff called "Nurse Parkinson's Slumber Soup."

LORD PLAICE. Perhaps it's running in its sleep. "Somnambulism," I've heard it called. Is there anything against it in the rules?

[The scene shifts to a tent where a race gang are in conference.]

"DUDE" BLOGGS. Let's run a crooked sweepstake on the last race. We won't pay for our own tickets at all.

TONY THE BALT. Nobody's welshed so far, so that cuts out blackmail, but we could make a twopenny profit



"Only about one in a thousand shows the slightest sign of any individuality."

PUNCH COMFORTS FUND

THIS Fund, through the generosity of its subscribers, has provided vast quantities of comforts for the Fighting Forces, the Merchant Navy and for the Bombed. Comforts have also been supplied for the Forces of our Allies.

We feel that the time has now come to provide what comforts we can for the men, women and children of the liberated areas, and for the pitiful human beings released from concentration camps. Many appeals are being made to us to help relieve this terrible situation.

PLEASE HELP

Donations will be most gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch, PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940

on a cup of tea, which would pay better in the long run.

"DUDE" BLOGGS. Dishonest tips! Sixpence each, and instead of names of horses all they contain is advice such as "Faint praise never won fair lady," or "Honesty never made the best of a Policy."

Enter the POLICE

POLICE. Move along here.

"DUDE" BLOGGS. Do you take bribes?

POLICE. Surely that would be rather venal, wouldn't it?

TONY THE BALT. It took us three days to pitch this tent and I doubt if anyone could strike it.

POLICE. Sublet the tent and move along as before.

"DUDE" BLOGGS. There is a provision against subletting in the lease, nor can we be a soap refinery.

POLICE. When does it expire?

"DUDE" BLOGGS. Ninety-nine years from the date thereof, but as it just says "Tuesday" it's almost freehold.

POLICE. Well, move about inside the tent or I'll get the wife to read the Riot Act. Seven months she's been on the Bench and never a chance yet.

TONY THE BALT. We're going for a drink, anyway. Some owners want us to dope their trainers.

[The scene changes to the White Horse.]

TAPSTER. Come, landlord, fill the flowing bowl.

LANDLORD. But I filled it only ten minutes ago. You're serving too big a portion. Put another beer mat in the tankard.

BARMAID. Why can't we have a beer engine like everyone else?

LANDLORD. Because we're Quaint, higher prices and lower overheads.

TAPSTER. When am I going to be promoted to mulling? It's good warm work, with scope.

THE OLDEST INHABITANT. I'm worried. Can I remember Loo?

LANDLORD. I'll look it up.

Enter variously SIR OTTO PARKER, LORD PLAICE and the gang. The mechanical piano plays several bars of plain-song.

SIR OTTO PARKER. Drinks are on the house, if anywhere. I want volunteers for dirty work at the cross-roads.

TONY THE BALT. Too public.

SIR OTTO PARKER. Three of them are cul-de-sacs.

"DUDE" BLOGGS. How do you pay?

LORD PLAICE. By results.

TONY THE BALT. Stingy!

[The sliding panel reveals ALDERMAN BOWDLER, Chairman of the Licensing Justices.]

BOWDLER. My sojourn in the Priest's Hole has been justified. There are too many seats in the room.

LANDLORD. But on two sides they slope towards the floor and on the third they're misericordes.

BOWDLER. You forfeit your licence, and those present will be bound over for life.

"DUDE" BLOGGS. Does that apply to all forms of crime?

BOWDLER. Yes.

GANG AND OWNERS. Foiled!

FINIS

Impending Apology

"The Rev. J. A. — dispensed communion on Sunday morning to a large congregation in — Church. It was his farewell service, and at the close he shook hands with each member.

He is now on his way to take up his new post at Haifa, Palestine.

Rev. J. — of — officiated at the Thanksgiving Service in the evening."—*Scottish paper.*



"Fancy letting us insist on washing up!"



S. Ireland

"This used to be Perpendicular."

Elegance à la Mode

IT must have been force of habit that had guided Jane and me towards the fishmonger—or perhaps a taste for company. Social life dies hard, and a little still lingers in the queue.

Our goal scarcely merited the squandered time of so stolid an array of stalwart British matrons; a cod's head and a few mauve shrimps seemed meagre reward for our endurance.

We had hardly settled down when we were joined by Elizabeth.

"I've been longing for someone to talk to," she said. "I've had time in the parsnip queue to do some thinking and have decided to re-organize my life."

"When are you starting?" asked Jane.

"I have been meditating on elegance," Elizabeth went on, "and have come to the conclusion that we are on the verge of the time when elegance must re-enter our lives."

Elegance! The crocodile of well-worn coats, of ill-tied turbans, of splitting shopping-bags vanished. My semi-fashioned stockings turned to nylon and my utility fabric gloves to the finest doeskin, wrinkling softly over the wrist; I was stepping from a purring limousine; an Aubusson carpet was under my feet; I was sitting on a chair of sombre malogany; dark wine had found its way from some French castle into one of the tall glasses twinkling at my right hand. So they were Knellers, the charming portraits on the walls. And indeed, the hand of Adam was patent in that plaster-work. Yes, I was most appreciative of Capo da Monte and would love to see my host's first editions. No, I wouldn't have grapes, exquisitely as they lay on the Leeds dish—perhaps an olive as I hadn't finished my claret. . . .

Jane, the realist, turned to Elizabeth.

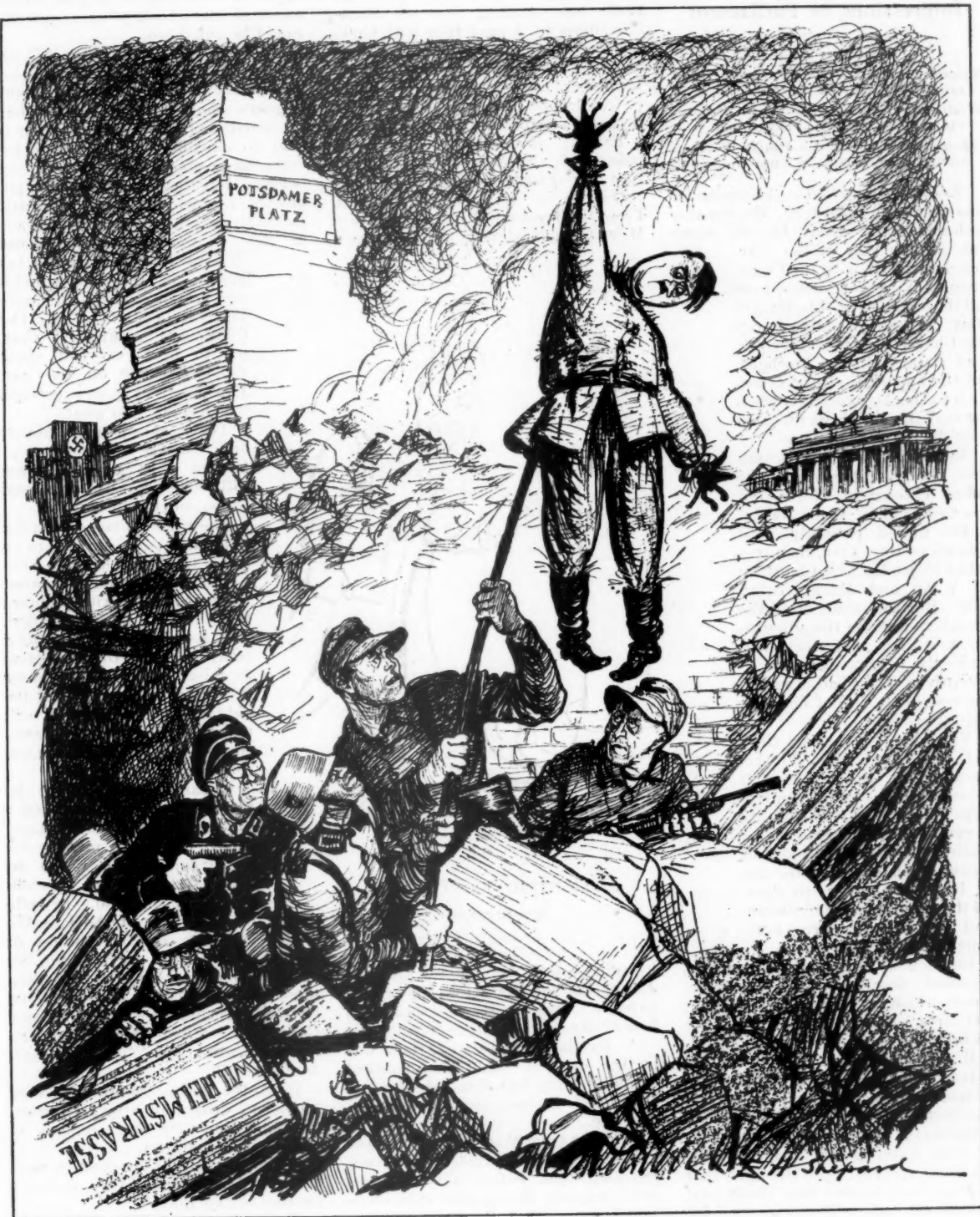
"Now tell us how you are starting

on your elegance campaign," she began. "A ten-pound limit is on in your area I am afraid. But I know of a little man who can do wonders. Now one's bedroom is important. How about dead-white distemper and some of that really crisp muslin—it takes hardly any coupons? Or would you rather concentrate on the drawing-room? Your covers have really done yeoman's service. Unless of course you were thinking of clothes. I always say a really expensive black frock—"

"Actually," interrupted Elizabeth, "I wasn't thinking of anything so ambitious."

She began fumbling in her basket. "It was this I've just bought that made me think how inelegant we've all been getting."

As she spoke she held up a three-cornered object executed in white enamel and punctured with small round holes. It was a sink tidy.



THE LAST HEIL

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done:

Tuesday, April 24th.—House of Commons: Mr. Speaker Lights the Way.

Wednesday, April 25th.—House of Commons: The Budget is Discussed.

Thursday, April 26th.—House of Commons: P.M. Makes an Announcement.

Tuesday, April 24th.—Assuredly for the first time in history, Mr. Speaker (who normally makes himself scarce on this one day of the year, leaving the chair to the Chairman of Ways and Means) took all the limelight on this, Budget Day. All down the centuries the Chancellor of the Exchequer had claimed all the limelight, all the applause, all the attention for his Day of Days, when he told the nation its financial fate for the year to come.

But to-day Sir JOHN ANDERSON, the present holder of the office, entered in silence, uncheered—almost unnoticed.

He waited patiently until Questions were over, then rose when Major MILNER, Chairman of Ways and Means, called him. But the minds of all the Members were on the adjournment. Not that they had suddenly become lazy or inattentive. They had a special interest in the fall of night on this occasion.

For when the normal dim-out time came, at 9.30 this evening, Mr. Speaker was to operate the strange square object that had made its appearance on the arm of his Chair, and that would switch on the great lantern at the top of Big Ben's tower, to show all the world that the black-out and the dim-out were both things of the past.

But nobody expected the dramatic, dignified, deeply moving little ceremony which Mr. Speaker, in about forty-five seconds, managed to have enshrined in the history of Parliament.

Rising amid loud cheers, Colonel CLIFTON BROWN politely asked leave to make a "slight interruption" and was answered by a great roar of cheers.

Speaking with some emotion—for he was fulfilling an ambition—Mr. Speaker explained that the light that in peace-time showed that Parliament was sitting had been extinguished for five years, seven months and twenty-three days.

"As I press this switch, the lantern

light will go on again," he said, and there was another roar of cheers. "In doing so, I pray that with God's blessing this light may shine not only as an outward and visible sign that the Parliament of a free people is assembled in free debate, but as a beacon of hope in a sadly torn and distracted world."

Pausing dramatically, his hand poised, Mr. Speaker cried: "I now turn on our lantern light!"

Outside a great crowd cheered. From the Treasury Bench Mr. GEORGE MATHERS moved that the SPEAKER'S

Japan or the change-over from all-out war to as near all-out peace as possible would be cut down.

Sir JOHN has so perfect a till-side manner, as one wit put it, that he soon had half the House nodding contentedly in gentle slumber, while the other half sat wondering why it should take so long to explain a Budget that left everything precisely where it was before. But the Chancellor had a pile of notes an inch thick, and he clearly meant to read them right through; and he did. It was quite the queerest

Budget Day your scribe has known in the last twenty-one years. Nobody was much interested—even when the Chancellor mentioned that, up to now, we had spent £27,400,000,000 on the war. Everybody wore an expression which said: "So what?"

They sat up momentarily and cheered when he mentioned that of that sum £13,300,000,000 had been paid for out of current revenue.

The whole House—even the somnolent—sat up again a little later when Sir JOHN warned everybody against being too lavish with promises that meant more taxation. This seemed to be taken as a subtle reference to the election promises that may come along later, and there were what the old-fashioned newspapers used to call "cheers and counter-cheers"—especially the counter-cheers.

Refraining from what he playfully called "excessive optimism," the Chancellor mentioned that total revenue for the coming year would be £3,265,000,000, total expenditure £4,500,000,000. In spite of the ruling of the late Mr. Micawber on this subject of revenue and expenditure, Sir

JOHN seemed to find this position more than satisfactory. Lord (National Savings) KINDERSLEY, in the Peers' Gallery, wore a look which said: "You leave the rest to me!" As Sir JOHN doubtless will.

When the Budget Speech was over the debate drifted amiably along until the time came for the ceremony of Lighting the Lantern.

It had been one of the most memorable Budget Days of history—but not because of the Budget.

Wednesday, April 25th.—Forthright Mr. BRENDAN BRACKEN, the Minister of Information, promised that films of the German horror camps would be



RE-LIGHTING THE CANDLE

MR. SPEAKER

historic words be entered in the Journals of the House for all posterity to read. Agreed. It was a thrilling, a beautifully symbolic little ceremony.

As for the Budget—well, there was hardly one at all. The political correspondents had forecast an "As-you-were" Budget, and it certainly was one.

It might have been called a "Hope-of-Things-to-Come" Budget. Sir JOHN promised that before this financial year ends on March 31st 1946 there would be another Budget, in which there would be tax cuts. Meanwhile there would be economies and everything not necessary to the war against



"Of course they'd only be temporary; but twenty thousand of them, quickly erected, would soon solve our housing problem."

shown to the German people. He mentioned his view that, in times to come, the wily German would prove as efficient in organizing whining as he had been in organizing fighting in the past. So beware, said the Minister.

Mr. DUNCAN SANDYS told the House that he had an idea which might make the Germans realize they had lost the war and at the same time do good to those gentlemen (and ladies) of England who have no homes to-day because of the German bombs and V-weapons. He is to look into the possibility of Germany's sending over housing materials, complete prefabricated houses, and other things which would relieve our housing problem. Remembering the chaos after the last war, many Members were not too sure that this piece of poetic justice would "work out." But they agreed that it showed the right spirit.

Mr. MARTIN put forward the bright idea that people from every occupied

city and town in Germany (Members loved the "occupied," rather wondered how people could be got from one that was not) should be made to look at the horror camps and then lecture their fellow-townspersons, with cinemas or lantern slides.

Mr. CHURCHILL merely said: "No," and most of the House felt this answer to be just right.

The House then went on to talk about the Budget, and seemed to find a good deal to say about it. But, as there was no change in taxes, few but the financial punditti joined in. And they got so technical that they left but little impression on your scribe.

Thursday, April 26th.—Mr. CHURCHILL arrived this afternoon looking very pleased with life, and sat on the Treasury Bench waiting to answer questions. In due time Mr. GEOFFREY HUTCHINSON gravely asked whether he was able to "make a statement with regard to the enemy rocket attacks."

Mr. CHURCHILL rose. He looked around. He adjusted his glasses. He

conned his notes. He spoke. "Yes, sir," he said, "they have ceased!"

When the laughter ceased also Mr. CHURCHILL was seen to be sitting once more quietly in his place. But there was a smile on the face of the tiger, who had taken Mr. HUTCHINSON for a ride.

The Good Old Days

"When I went out to Papua, New Guinea, I was disappointed because there were no cannibals," Miss Mary Abel, a missionary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, told a meeting of the Hampstead Auxiliary of the Society at Trinity Church Hall, Finchley Road, last week. "My uncle went out 16 years ago with James Chalmers, who was clubbed to death and eaten by the cannibals."—*Suburban paper.*

Swan Song

"The cuckoo was heard as far north as Yorkshire in the Thames, at Teddington . . ."—*Evening paper.*



"Well then: White'all first, then the War Office, next the Admiralty, and THEN the B.B.C."

Our War-Time Query Corner

Ask Evangeline!

Q. Would you say that four uninhibited years in a cookhouse could spoil one for interior decorating in cultured homes? Sometimes when I stand gazing into a great panful of simmering stew and think of all the tears and perspiration put into that Renaissance kitchenette I had just completed for a retired snake-charmer when I was called up, or that soul-of-an-orchid boudoir I was planning for a wealthy bucket manufacturer, I feel that if it wasn't for mother I should say to myself, "Dash class obligations! Of what avail is all this hob-nobbing with the great, if the heart is in soups and gravies?"

Pte. CUTHBERT BUSTARD.

A. Only the other day we received

a query from a former titled beauty whose life's work will continue to be the raking of the coke stove in the communal kitchen where war has transformed her into a most vivacious Cinderella; thus there is nothing to be ashamed of, Private Bustard, in your ambition to join the ranks of the Lambert Simnels for good. On the other hand, I do feel that interior decorating, like everything else, is on the march. After years of austerity feeding I can imagine that the accent will be on food, so that an ingenious decorator should be able to get soups and gravies out of his system without losing his footing in society. That is to say, let your bucket manufacturer whistle for his soul - of - an - orchid boudoir; do him a tomato ketchup one

instead—all gauzy red hangings and salmon-pink lighting. A *décor* should be in keeping with the personality of its owner. Think how very much simpler it is going to be to visualize your clients in terms not of Easter lilies and Alhambran ante-chambers, but of egg omelettes, underdone steaks and warm milk and arrowroot biscuits.

* * * * *

Q. The only really comfortable seat in this furnished flat is a good pre-war dentist's chair which a previous tenant left fixed in the floor. Would it be correct to assign it to the guest of honour at a rather formal ex-fireguards' hot-pot supper? My wife thinks it might put people off their food.

E. ST. K. TRACY CARRUTHERS.

A. In these days of even stricter meat rationing, your wife should be glad to catch at anything conducive to loss of appetite among guests. Otherwise I agree that you need to be careful whom you seat in it. It would be awkward if someone began gargling with a mouthful of soup or tucking his napkin into his collar and opening wide.

* * * * *

Q. My dream of living within reach of Wigan seemed about to be realized when my sister and family offered me part of a very cosy cemetery lodge in the district, but it appears that under a new transport regulation furniture may be conveyed by carrier only one hundred and twenty miles. Being at present situated one hundred and twenty-six miles from the burial-ground in question, I am told my effects will be dumped on the roadside somewhere between Much Offal and Bishops' Tripp. Needless to say, I do not like the idea, as it will seem so public, and in making final arrangements with the carrier I did not hesitate to tell him my views. "And what is going to happen to my grained walnut hatstand, etc.," I asked, "if I cannot count on getting anything reliable out of Much Offal?" He said, "Well, Missis, you've buttered your bread on both sides; I suppose you'll have to lie on it." What did he mean by that?

(Mrs.) CLARA MOFFIT.

A. Probably he meant that one cannot expect perfection in war-time. But why worry? See that all heavier articles of furniture are provided with castors, then go on ahead to Much Offal and get your sister and family and any acquaintances you can whip together to accompany you to meet the carrier's van. The rest is simple. Take one heavy article of furniture apiece, pile smaller objects upon it in a tasteful little still-life group and commence pushing. I can well imagine one might feel a certain shyness about entering a strange town propelling a grained walnut hatstand surmounted by a trio of saucepans and assorted stair-rods, if unaccompanied, but when one's neighbour on one side has a treadle sewing-machine with pianola and foot-bath clasped upon it, and someone behind is grappling with a nest of occasional tables and a couple of curtain poles, I see little cause for confusion.

* * * * *

Q. What is the correct procedure in waving a flag on V-Day?

BARKING LADY.

A. Obviously no infallible rules can be laid down, as much depends

upon where the flag is waved—e.g., a wide arm movement would be correct if the person waving were in the middle of Ham Common, but in a congested tube train it would be ill-advised to attempt more than a spasmodic twitching of the wrist. In ordinary circumstances one endeavours to hit upon the technique best suited to one's general layout. The fragile feminine type, for example, moves her flag with a languid, fan-like gesture; it would betray lack of taste if she smashed hilariously from side to side, ramming hats over eyes and plucking neck-ties askew, though this would be all right for the hearty outdoor girl in a state of *l'été-montage* or for the tough grandmother used to all-in wrestling. As to when to wave, watch others closely and follow suit. Often a comparatively meaningless activity such as the appearance of an L.C.C. dust-cart is sufficient to arouse demonstrations from a crowd out to enjoy itself.

* * * * *

Q. I feel so bewildered when I read about frame culture, offsets and bulbils, etc., yet do not like to ask the other allotment-holders, as they seem so cliquish towards beginners. I was warned that I was taking an allotment among the most exclusive holdings on the site; all the same, I couldn't help feeling it the other evening when I called out, "I say, I'm going to mulch my broccoli!" and they just drew together and pretended to be examining an early marrow. Another worry is

that the bottom falls out of my watering-can every now and then, with the result that it sometimes takes me hours to moisten the tiniest radish, and the path from the tap, which is also a right of way to the local lodge of the Ancient Order of Buffaloes, gets quite messy.

H. G. WOOLLEY-URQUHART.

A. It sounds to us as though your gardening life lacks co-ordination in some way. There is a possibility of course that the group apathy you mention sprang from a feeling that sufficient mulching had already been done on the path to the Buffaloes' lodge, but our private belief is that the incident did not, as such, take place. A psychologist's findings would show that, as a child, you refused to eat your greens, and this gives you the feeling that everybody even indirectly engaged in husbandry is in some way antagonistic. Again, the marrow subconsciously recalled the figure of your old maths. teacher, so you imaginatively made your fellow allotment-holders close round it to conceal the recollection that you could never get the square root to come out in quadratic equations. Our advice is that you confine your reading to healthy crime fiction for a while; never mind the offsets and bulbils. Take a rest and try to get things adjusted (beginning with your watering-can). It is fatal to force the pace.

* * * * *

Q. If these portal houses they talk about can be put up in twenty minutes, what is to stop them being took down in twenty minutes? Some nice goings-on there'll be in these parts.

Mrs. HOPE BLOTCHER.

A. I would have thought that the possibility of periodically renewing one's neighbours might have added to the fascinations of the prefabricated dwelling. However, I dare say there will be by-laws formulated to meet the danger—e.g., "Tenants are reminded that residences must be left in the exact position in which they were found"; "Persons littering public footpaths with portions of prefabricated dwellings will be fined forty shillings and costs"; "Passengers carrying with them prefabricated houses on long-distance buses do so at their own risk"; "Persons found erecting portal houses at famous queue sites or in groups opposite to houses of refreshment will be instantly taken into custody"; "Cloakroom attendants are empowered to refuse to accept prefabricated dwellings unless folded neatly"; and so on.



At the Play

"THE DUCHESS OF MALFI"
(HAYMARKET)

ROUND about the cauldron go. There is a strong magic in this midnight. JOHN WEBSTER, thickening the hell-broth with most of the terrors of the Jacobean stage, enchants all that he puts in. It is, to be sure, an uncomfortable form of enchantment. There is no hey-nony-nony about it. The Websterian night is feverish: now it stifles, now freezes. ("Methinks 'tis very cold," says *Bosola* to *Antonio*, "and yet you sweat: you look wildly.") With this dramatist we fear to glance behind; the fiend is at our elbow. *The Duchess of Malfi* may be a lesser work than *The White Devil*. We may lament its fifth-act cluster of corpses and the grinding apparatus of horror. Yet who—Mr. Bernard Shaw excepted—can listen in mockery to *Bosola's* dirge (like the rustle of a winding-sheet) or remain quite unaffected by the dews and damps, the fever-chills, the sudden hectic flushes, the charnel-splendours of WEBSTER's verse and prose?

We know next to nothing of this dramatist's life. Even the dates of his birth and death are uncertain. Playgoers admired him as a First Gravedigger, a man about the tomb; none could make more of the worm, the canker, and the grief, or penetrate so shrewdly what *Bosola* in *The Duchess* calls the "shadow, or deep pit of darkness" in which "womanish and fearful" mankind lives. WEBSTER was the Jacobean Theatre Royal: to-day, when he is revived at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, he can still hold the stage superbly—though not with his onepotent tricks of waxen figures, severed hands, and routs of madmen. (The last *danse macabre* just fails to chill.)

We need not linger over the plot. It is enough to say that the young widowed *Duchess* weds in secret *Antonio*, steward of her household; that her brothers, *Ferdinand Duke of Calabria* and a corrupt Cardinal, respectively wolf and fox, seek her doom; and that *Daniel de Bosola*, a

scoundrel with both a downright relish and a curious intricacy of mind, becomes her torturer in a procession of protracted death. The fifth act is the usual mopping-up operation.

Bosola is the play's overmastering part. This mercenary, ripe for any enterprise, has a lurking conscience and an out-and-out way of expressing himself that must have endeared him mightily to his first audiences. Mr. CECIL TROUNCER, skilled in black vesper's pageants, now presents the fellow with a dark pleasure and raises the hair with his utterance of the dirge:



BLACK OUTLOOK

Duchess of Malfi MISS PEGGY ASHCROFT

"'Tis now full tide 'tween night and day; End your groan and come away." Few could bring more grace to the *Duchess* than MISS PEGGY ASHCROFT. She commands the part from the rapture of the wooing to the moment when, her face "folded in sorrow," she can say yet: "I am *Duchess of Malfi* still." *Ferdinand of Calabria*, frenzied and wolfish, is a part to stun the modern actor, but Mr. JOHN GIELGUD sustains its passion. "A very salamander lives in's eye To mock the eager violence of fire." His brother the Cardinal fades before *Ferdinand*: Mr. LEON QUARTERMAINE, rich speaker though he is, lacks the ominous sunset quality of this scarlet sin. Mr. LESLIE BANKS's *Antonio*, on the other hand,

is a good match for the *Duchess*. The actor's charm masks the poorness of the part, which (we are here persuaded) acts better than it reads. Altogether the tragedy has returned to the stage under an auspicious star: it is happy in Mr. GEORGE RYLANDS's production, and in the sombre magnificence of the sets by Mr. ROGER FURSE. J. C. T.

"THE WIND OF HEAVEN"
(ST. JAMES'S)

Mr. EMLYN WILLIAMS's Celtic imagination aids him as a dramatist. But his love of the purple patch—Celtic also—sometimes betrays him. *The Wind of Heaven* is a play intensely felt, carefully contrived. It is the tale of a Second Coming, of the wonder that befell a bereaved Welsh mountain village nearly ninety years ago. The author's sincerity and reverence, his judgment in the early creation of atmosphere, his sense of what will and will not pass in the theatre—these gifts are undeniable. More's the pity then that in places the writing is so over-charged. Certain scenes have a fine and telling reticence. Miss MEGS JENKINS as the mother of the Child, and that grand actor Mr. HERBERT LOMAS as an elder of the village, gnarled and true, have been served well; their performances repay the author. Mr. WILLIAMS, who acts with his accustomed intensity, has been less successful with the fabric of his own part, a circus proprietor whose gibes turn to prayer. Here the author protests too much: it is hard indeed to accept this *Ambrose Ellis*, or to have faith in his future powers as an evangelist.

The piece, compact of Biblical parallels—some effective, others (like the crowing of the cock) disconcerting—is by no means in the muster-roll of the commercial theatre, yet one would pause before ranking it higher than a distinguished attempt at the impossible. Many will admire it. All will value production and performance. (Besides those mentioned, Miss DIANA WYNYARD has a still beauty as the widow changed from sceptic to believer.) The quality of the writing must remain more debatable.

J. C. T.

At the Ballet

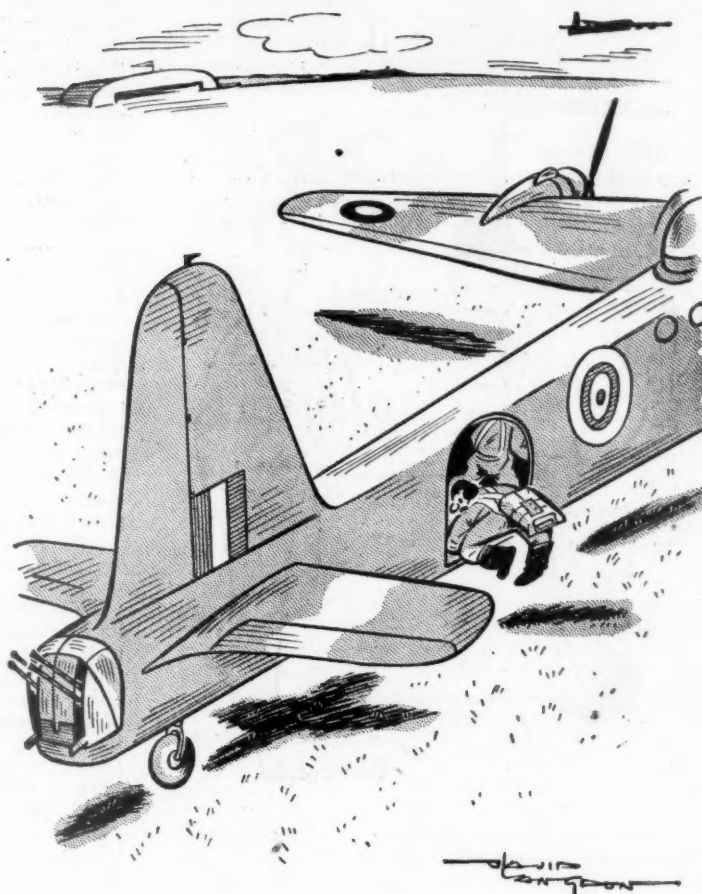
VARIETY

THE chestnuts and the hawthorn are in bloom in the park, a mixed squadron of ducks with a flotilla of ducklings, based on a patch of weeds, have appeared on the local emergency tank, and there is ballet again at the New Theatre. Spring is here. Perhaps you are a balletomane who sits in the same seat night after night wishing you had lived in the days when you might have crowned your evening's enjoyment by quaffing champagne from MARGOT FONTEYN'S shoe. Perhaps you only go to the ballet once in a way. But whatever your taste, be it for the classics, for burlesque, for mimed drama with a moral, for a light-hearted *divertissement* or Shakespearean tragedy translated into movement—there is something for your every mood, in the Sadler's Wells repertoire.

The first-night programme had the piquant variety of a pre-war *hors d'œuvre*, beginning with a moral tale—*The Rake's Progress*—and ending with the choreographic fantasia on *Hamlet*, with lighthearted *Carnaval* in between. *The Rake* and *Hamlet* provide ROBERT HELPMANN with his two most effective rôles. *The Rake* is HOGARTH'S young man who inherits a fortune and with its aid goes picturesquely to the bad, and HELPMANN'S portrayal of this character is vivid almost to luridness. We see him at first surrounded by tailors, fencing-masters and dancing-masters like Molière's hero *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, but there the resemblance ends. Molière's *parvenu* craves only to be a gentleman and to marry his daughter to the son of the Grand Turk, but HOGARTH'S young man wishes to learn the arts of a gentleman in order to go to the devil by the quickest possible route. Beginning with wine, women and song (the vignette of the ballad-monger is an unflinching delight in this scene) and the betrayal of an innocent girl who loves him, he pursues the downward path with increasing momentum to debtors' prisons and gambling dens until the doors of the lunatic asylum close on him at last. HELPMANN'S picture in the latter scene of the handsome young man become a brute beast is quite horrifying. The rôle of *Hamlet* in the dream-version that he created of the play suits him perfectly, and he is as brilliant in this ballet as he was disappointing when he acted the Shakespearean rôle last year. He no longer dances *Pierrot* in *Carnaval*, for MICHAEL SOMES has returned to the Wells from

the Forces, and received a great welcome from the audience on the first night. It is one of the fascinations of the ballet to see different artists in the same rôle, and to watch the effect of the changes on the ballet as a whole. HELPMANN'S tragi-comic *Pierrot* was the centre round which *Carnaval* revolved. MICHAEL SOMES' interpretation has great charm and pathos, but the change has resulted in a shifting of the emphasis of the whole ballet; the interest is now focused on ALEXIS RASSINE'S clever *Harlequin* (does he wag his head a little too much?) and the bewitching *Columbine* of MARGOT FONTEYN. And what a gifted artist Sadler's Wells has in GORDON HAMILTON. His foppish dancing-master in *The Rake* and the pompous absurdity of his *Pantalon* in *Carnaval* are masterpieces of their kind.

D. C. B.



"Same dam trouble every time—never anyone left to give ME a shove."

Wartime Proverbs

1. You can't make an omelette without adding water.
2. There's no smoke with no fire.
3. There's many a slip of a cup in the sink.
4. You can't make a silk dress out of unrationed hessian.
5. Fine feathers make fine pipe-cleaners.
6. A bird in the hand is worth two promised for Thursday.
7. Too many hops spoil the froth.
8. All is not fish that glistens.
9. You can take a cat to the household milk, but you can't make it drink.
10. He who waits last waits longest.



Hollowood

"Now take a phrase like 'Sez you'!—that would be current over here somewhat about 1650."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Shelley and Hogg

IN *Shelley at Oxford*, which is published by THE GOLDEN COCKEREL PRESS at three guineas, Mr. WALTER SIDNEY SCOTT completes his Shelley trilogy. As those who have read the first two volumes will remember, Mr. SCOTT is a stout champion of Jefferson Hogg, Shelley's friend at Oxford and the lover of both his wives. In the present volume, which in addition to some hitherto unpublished letters written by Mary Shelley and Thomas Love Peacock contains the correct versions of a number of letters from Shelley to Hogg, Mr. SCOTT's task as Hogg's advocate has been immensely simplified by the fact that these letters do not touch on Hogg's relations with either Harriet Westbrook or Mary Godwin. They are largely concerned with Shelley's first love, Harriet Grove, whom Hogg never met, and were altered by Hogg, when he published them in his life of Shelley, for the valid reason that they were too blasphemous for the taste of 1858. Harriet Grove having refused to correspond with him any longer, Shelley swore that he would wreak a terrible revenge on Christianity, being persuaded that Harriet, whose father did not favour Shelley's suit, had rejected him out of a bigoted detestation of his enlightened atheism. Never, he wrote to Hogg, would

he pardon Christianity this last, this severest of her persecutions—a sentiment which Hogg softened by substituting "bigotry" for "Christianity"; further emendations being "Heaven" for "God," and "the avenger" for "Anti-Christ." In another letter Hogg deleted the name of Leigh Hunt, who was still alive, and who might in his old age have deprecated Shelley's approving description of him and his wife as atheists who had converted each other from Wesleyan Methodism. Shelley was nineteen at this time. The most interesting of the letters in this volume was written to Hogg ten years later, eight or nine months before Shelley's death, and was published by Mary Shelley with many omissions which Mr. SCOTT has now restored. The rebellious excitement of his youth had died away, and after referring to "a very interesting Italian lady," Shelley adds lackadaisically—"but she is now married; which, to quote our friend Peacock, is, you know, the same as being dead." He complains of his low spirits, says he has some thoughts of going to India, or anywhere where he might be compelled to active exertion, and sighs—"I shall probably have no opportunity of making it a reality but finish as I have begun." Understandably enough, all this is omitted by Mary, who also deleted a not ungenerous reference to Keats as "a young writer of bad taste, but wonderful power and promise."

H. K.

Boo Sien-sang, Methodist

To write the life of a missionary with little reference to its spiritual sources might seem a perverse and thankless task. Yet Mr. JAMES BURKE's *My Father in China* (JOSEPH, 15/-) is neither. As a son's record of a living father it is committed to reticence, but the outward signs of the missionary's inward graces are striking enough for the one to warrant the other. The Rev. W. B. Burke (Boo Sien-sang) spent his working life in China; and in 1934, at sixty-five, he left his family in Georgia and went back. He is still in Sungkiang, "thin and old" but "almost chummy" with the occupying Japanese. Early chapters show him at college with Charlie Soong, stowaway, missionary, miller, revolutionist and father of Madame Chiang Kai-Shek. Through Soong, a delightful character, our hero enters Chinese history at a rather depressing angle. In its day-to-day aspects, documented by honest and artless diaries, the story is rendered more harrowing and heroic by the ordeals of the missionary's two wives, who were expected to carry on quietly when the heads of newly-executed criminals were impaled on the mission gates. Their husband never quailed. "The carp," he said, *modo sinense*, "is supposed to breast the rapids and not just float with the tide."

H. P. E.

Reeds by the River

It is one of the recurrent riddles of literature that the authors, artists and musicians of fiction are very seldom really convincing, and even more seldom humanly attractive portraits. Artistic temperaments are, as everyone knows, not easy to live with; but their possessors are, on the other hand, very often the most lovable of people when their difficult side is not uppermost. Mr. REYNER BARTON's novel, called (rather inexplicably) *Descent from Nowhere* (CHAPMAN AND HALL, 8/6), is something of a case in point. It is, briefly, a variation on the old theme of Mrs. Browning's poem, "A Musical Instrument"; the conflicting claims of artistic genius and of human desires and affections, expressed in the married life of a composer who, after the death of his wife, a pianist of genius, tells the story of the failure of their matrimonial venture, and of his realization that

intellectual companionship and community of artistic interests cannot of themselves make an abiding human alliance. The pity is, however, that Mr. BARTON has depicted in the narrator so distressing a compound of artistic egoism and intellectual snobbery, that the reader's surprise at Helen's ever marrying him in the first place is only equalled by lack of surprise at her leaving him in the second.

C. F. S.

African Development

Africa, says Mr. JOYCE CARY in *The Case for African Freedom* (SECKER AND WARBURG, 7/6), is a poor continent, rapidly growing poorer. He should know something about it. In 1913 he joined the Nigerian political service, fought with the Nigerian regiment in the Cameroons, was wounded, and on returning to political duty was sent to one of the most primitive districts, where he had every opportunity of studying native conditions and the native mind. He maintains in this book, which is an enlarged edition of one published in 1941, that the African native has proved himself capable of becoming something more than a mere wage-slave. He can learn, and he must be educated, and at once, before the continent is overtaken by famine, misery and rebellion. New ideas are essential to the preservation of Africa. The soil is rapidly becoming exhausted. Millions of acres even now, we are told, seem beyond help: the soil has gone and left bare rock; nor are pastoral tribes much better. And then there is the colour bar. Taken all round, the African continent seems to be in a pretty mess, if we can trust Mr. CARY.

L. W.

Arthur Koestler

Mr. ARTHUR KOESTLER is a very intelligent Continental Socialist, who has been lecturing and writing in England since 1940. In *The Yogi and the Commissar* (CAPE, 10/6) he has collected a number of articles written during these years for English and American papers, and has also included an interesting and detailed examination, now published for the first time, of the Soviet experiment seen from the standpoint of a "homeless Leftist," as he calls himself. The Russia of to-day has, in his opinion, returned to the autocratic tradition of Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great, and the support given to its policies by the Left and Liberal press in England seems to him therefore to be based on mistaken premises. The Commissar of his title is typified for Mr. KOESTLER by the Soviet bureaucrat, who, like all his predecessors, is under the illusion that man can be changed by regimentation from without. Yet Mr. KOESTLER views no less coldly the opposite type, the Yogi, Gandhi, for example, who believes in the possibility of a mass-scale production of change from within. What, then, does move his enthusiasm? Quite friendly about the Americans and English, he finds them insensitive to the tragedy of Europe; his attitude to them is, at its most cordial, not far removed from the kindly indulgence with which an adult watches children sporting in a meadow. On the whole, the impression left by this book is that the author would be happier about the future of the world if it contained more people with his combination of insight and experience.

H. K.

Lime-light on Siam

Premising that historical drama begins where history leaves off, Mr. MAURICE COLLIS has brilliantly dramatized the career of the hero of *Siamese White* and successfully refrained from dramatizing his biography. Here, appositely enough, is the struggle between an English individualist

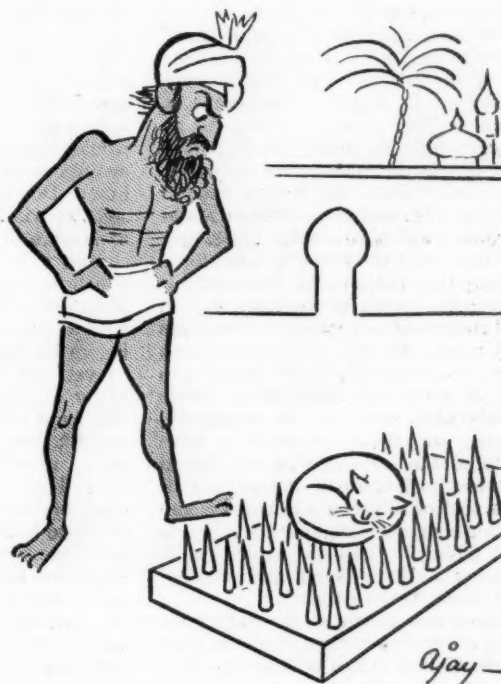
and an English royal monopoly—*White of Mergen* (FABER, 8/6) against the East India Company; its time, the seventeenth century, its scene the harbours and capital of Siam. A typical Drake-and-Hawkins spirit of pluck and profit-snatching, and the dark undeviating mood of Oriental distrust, "crouch on employment" by a prose Muse of distinction. The curtain rises on the merchantman which brings White and his future wife, Mary Povey—still another man's betrothed—from England. Their intertwined fortunes are sundered when White, in Siamese disfavour, is bidden to the capital by the King's Greek Prime Minister, Phaulkon. The play's Elizabethan blend of clowning and horror is at its subtlest in the doomed Phaulkon's relations with Louis XIV's blandishing French envoys, and all the *dramatis personae* present interpretive opportunities.

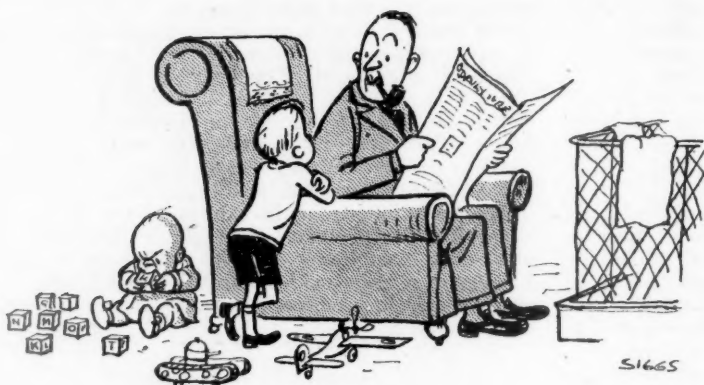
H. P. E.

"Longer than Mafeking"

On December 10th 1941 the Germans and Italians abandoned Hill 209, Rommel pulled away from Tobruk, and the fortress, which had been held for fifty-five days longer than Mafeking, was free. In *Tobruk* (ANGUS ROBERTSON, 15/-) Mr. CHESTER WILMOT gives us a detailed account of the siege—of the boredom that was worse than the Boche, the nagging irritations of flies and fleas, the perpetual patrols into enemy territory, and raids whose results combined to keep 40,000 enemy constantly employed against 23,000 beleaguered for several months. He begins with the story of the capture, and has much to say about the work of the Engineers, whose "de-lousing" of booby-traps and mines and use of anti-wire home-made torpedoes made the assault possible. The author pays tribute to General Morshead and all his men, but says little about his personal feelings. The book is well-written, well-produced, and has excellent maps and photographs.

B. E. B.





"What was the post-war world like after the last war?"

The Revenge

THERE is a class of man that preys on writers, and they know it and usually submit as the helpless rabbit submits to the weasel, or the sheep submits, according to his locality, to the wolf or the parrot-hawk. These docile creatures in most cases submit because they are unable to distinguish the hunter until he is practically upon them, being good at writing books, but being not much of a hand at letters, and it is through letters that the kind of man of whom I am telling does all of his hunting. He is in fact the autograph-hunter. Sometimes he writes to the people on whom he lives, merely asking for an autograph in so many words, which they give as the rabbit gives the weasel his carcase when that hunter appears quite openly; but more often he stalks his prey, which is usually too simple to know what the autograph-hunter is getting at. These stalks, these various approaches, must be carefully studied and annotated and collected in volumes and cannot be adequately dealt with here, in a story whose sole object is to tell of a revenge that these simple people took once on an autograph-hunter, so rare as perhaps to have some of the interest that we should give to a flock of sheep charging a wolf. It is told of sometimes in clubs where old authors meet, shaking their beards and telling it with sly smiles, while younger authors listen and wonder, and rarely believe them.

There was a man, so the story goes, who, concealing himself in the interior of the United States of America, used to write letters to authors that hardly

ever failed to draw the necessary reply. He was one of the most successful autograph-hunters of a great age: that he knew all the vanities of the most lucrative authors goes without saying, but he knew far more than that. He knew what theme would stir each one to answer immediately, and even with heat, not necessarily those things that the author liked, for he wisely realized that an author was likely to have plenty of people more or less accessible, who might approve of things of which he approved, without his being driven to reach a hand across the Atlantic to find somebody who would agree with him; rather he would sting an author to draw pen against some heresy that would stir him as Don Quixote was stirred by the sight of windmills. Such letters were as it were his weapons, but he had a shrewd knowledge also of the field in which to employ them, he had a good judgment of literature, and often knew who was going to be a lucrative writer before his own countrymen had even, as yet, got used to his eccentricity. Many a grateful holograph letter he got from them at a time when no sensible person would write to them at all. I may be thought to exaggerate, when I say that he bought a special chest-of-drawers for such letters. These first two bits of knowledge that I have mentioned were gifts with him, but he combined them with sheer hard work, and plodded through all the books of the principal writers of the day, as well as the books of those he would spot as being their probable successors. It is a curious circumstance, but

believed to be true in more than one literary club, that he made a far larger income by the sale of these letters than the poor silly writers were able to get for themselves. It might be thought that a considerable income derived from the sale of holograph letters would have made such a stir in many markets that the authors must have been warned of what was happening. But not a bit of it: many a man has seen blackbuck feeding while the tiger was in full sight, or sheep quietly eating grass within five minutes of one of them having been killed by a wolf; and these authors scarcely threw up their heads. But they had their revenge. Some chance notice that he took one day of the unbusinesslike nature of writers made him very sure that he could do a great deal better himself. And he did too. He started writing. Consider his qualifications: he knew the styles of all the best living writers, he knew a great deal about their feelings, and he had such a flair for literature that he could tell years before it is usually done who would be a lucrative writer. In addition to this he had read and studied and, in the ordinary course of his business, made many long excerpts from the best books of the day. Little wonder that when he started writing he got not merely a large proportion of the readers of any one famous author; he got a very considerable number of the readers of the whole lot of them. Where any one of them could sell an edition of ten thousand copies he was very soon selling editions of a hundred and fifty thousand, often as many as two or three such editions in one year.

And then the authors struck. It was not merely that they realized at last what was going on, but they somehow had the sense to see what a good thing it was. He had been in long and intimate correspondence with all of them. As one man they had gone home to their wives and their secretaries, rather I would have said as one flock of sheep, had it not at this moment occurred to me that sheep have no secretaries; and all of them asked where those old letters were. Many of them were lost, many were burnt, as sometimes happened to their own manuscript; but many remained, in an untidiness of which they were no small part; and the authors started selling them. At last they knew what money was; at last . . . but I should like to end this story here, at the height of their affluence, before Somerset House got to hear of it and came down on them with its taxes, the story of a curious and great revenge.

ANON.

Still Life

I AM dreaming a golden dream of a workless world where we sit talking in the sun. What is that breaking in on it so rudely? It is a knocking at the door. Rhythmical, muscular, determined. I kick my way blindly into my slippers and stagger downstairs.

"Arthur Chinthurst," says a man in a grey suit, bowing stiffly.

"Mrs. Arthur Chinthurst," says a lady of middle age, peering unemotionally at me through blue glasses.

"Quite so," I reply, asking myself quickly what the devil this plain but evidently well-nourished couple can be about to sell me.

"You remember the four-fifteen from Hull, August 1940?" says Mrs. Arthur Chinthurst. "I removed a small flying beetle from your left eye and you said if ever we were this way?"

"The four-ten from Hull," Mr. Arthur Chinthurst corrects her. He is what is called a stickler.

A bell rings dimly in one of the many disused attics in my head. "Of course," I exclaim, "come in." It's too late now to hope I shall stop saying things to people in trains. "Sit down, won't you? Those are Virginian, and those a fully combustible sub-Mediterranean blend. Have you come far?"

"About twenty-two and a half miles," says Mrs. Arthur Chinthurst.

"Nearer twenty-three," says Mr. Arthur Chinthurst, but without rancour.

"You must forgive me if I'm dishevelled, but when I'm on leave I usually sleep in the afternoons."

Mrs. Arthur Chinthurst nods non-committally. So does Mr. Arthur Chinthurst. There is something about these two which does not encourage a balanced conversation. I am in grave danger of taking the thick end of the wedge between my teeth.

"Are we not exceptionally lucky in having as First Minister of the Crown a man who not only believes in but steadfastly practises the siesta?" I demand desperately. "Not the least of the many ways in which in my view Mr. Churchill sets us a splendid example is that he insists on refreshing his incomparable machinery by going to bed after lunch."

No Chinthurst muscle stirs.

"As a gesture of confidence in him," I plunge on, "I am trying now to establish the principle of the siesta in one of our great Service departments. It is frankly uphill work. Ever since the Puritan Revolution people in this

country have been ashamed of being seen asleep except in the dark."

No shadow of a smile invades the cod-like Chinthurst calm.

"After the war we must insist on every office being provided with horizontal accommodation for the whole of its staff."

No little breeze of sympathy rustles the weeds fringing the great swamp of the Chinthurst mind. I look furtively at my watch. It is four.

"If you will excuse me I will get tea."

In the kitchen I do deep-breathing

exercises to relax the knots I have tied in myself. While I am waiting for the kettle to boil I tell myself my visitors only need a little dripping-toast to loosen them up. But all that dripping-toast drags from them is:

"Father used to fall asleep in buses towards the end."

"Trams, more often."

From what aquarium are these two sprung, and why? . . .

Five has struck. They are sitting very upright on the edge of their chairs, finding nothing alarming in a silence I discover I can lean against. Energy



"Does this bus go—ah—anywhere neab Whitehall?"
"Daifinitely."

is draining from me at a great rate. Weakly I embark on a harrowing account of a French friend mauled by a jaguar. . . .

Six strikes. Mrs. Arthur Chinthurst has now been looking fixedly for half an hour at the little ship we bought at St. Tropez, and Mr. Arthur Chinthurst is entirely absorbed in contemplation of his left boot, which is made of a rather yellow leather. I myself am five years older. I grip my chair.

"I ought to warn you," I whisper, or shout, I have no idea which, "the Army are carrying out an experiment in the field behind this house at six-fifteen. The War Office hope it will be successful, but if not there will be a very severe explosion."

Both Chinthursts dip their heads slightly to show the message has been received and understood. What unfathomable urge can have lured them from the primeval ooze? . . .

Seven.

"Will you excuse me a moment while I put a hot-water bottle in my uncle's bed? He shivers a lot with his yellow fever."

The Chinthursts nod politely. No one could say they are not wonderfully polite. I go and fetch the children's money-box.

"I am asking all my friends for five pounds for the Gin-for-Father League," I say roughly.

"Certainly," replies Mr. Arthur Chinthurst, getting up and stuffing five pounds into the box before I can stop him. Then he sits down again, and I bury my face in my hands. . . .

"It was hardly worth your sitting down," says Mrs. Arthur Chinthurst, suddenly. "The last bus goes at eight."

"Eight-five, I think," says Mr. Arthur Chinthurst. But nevertheless they both get up and we shake hands.

"It's been nice," murmurs Mrs. Arthur Chinthurst dispassionately.

"It's been very nice," murmurs Mr. Arthur Chinthurst, cod-like to the end.

"It couldn't have been nicer," I croak.

But no sooner is the door closed on them than I find I have lied. Being without Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Chinthurst is nicer still. It is the nicest thing I think I can ever remember. I am as tired as if I had swum from the North Pole. I am going to spend the rest of my leave digging an impenetrable moat.

ERIC.

Base Depot

THERE are two messes at the Pioneer Corps Depot in the Middle East, one for the permanent staff and one for officers passing through. Somebody told Captain Symphon that the beer supply was better in the staff mess, so we pretended we were on the staff, and attached ourselves to the staff mess, only to find that if anything the supply was slightly better in the other mess, which meant that we had to walk from one mess to the other when our own supply ran out, and try to look as if we belonged in the other mess by examining the board carefully to see if there were any letters for us, although we had already got them from the staff mess.

It was on one of these dishonourable raiding expeditions that Symphon made one of the silliest remarks of his career.

"It is easy enough to manage Africans," he said, "if you understand their psychology."

From that day forth he was known as Psychology Symphon, because understanding Africans is much the same as understanding women or officers' allowances—the more you

study the question the more surprised you constantly are at what happens when you act in what you thought was rather a clever way. And people who had worked with Africans for a long time kept asking him for advice in a very sarcastic way.

"I've only lived in Kenya fifty years," said Lieutenant McDay, "and I'd be glad to know what you would do with a man who came into the office every morning and insisted on telling you his dreams."

"Listen to him patiently," said Symphon. "Patience is a great thing with Africans."

"I did, the first morning," said the Kenya man, "and he went on for three hours. In the end he said that General Montgomery had come to him in the night and told him he was going to be a lance-corporal soon. So I told him that if General Montgomery confirmed the promotion to me in one of my own dreams I would act on it. Since then I have refused to listen to his dreams, and he says he cannot eat, and is wasting away to a shadow."

"I'll come along in the morning and listen to his dreams for you," said Symphon.

So the next morning he went along, and presently Private Majoma Kiwanka came in, and Symphon politely waved him to a seat and asked him to tell him his dreams. They were the most comprehensive dreams he had ever heard of, all about his cows being stolen and Hitler riding through the East African Wing on a donkey with his (Majoma's) kitbag on his head, and Mr. Churchill and Majoma's wife smoking cigars in the officers' mess.

After an hour or so Symphon felt very much inclined to tell Majoma to go away and put his head in a bucket of water, but having told everybody in the Depot that it was best to be patient with Africans he heard him to the end, and was only saved eventually by the time arriving for the African's dinner.

"You made a great impression on Majoma," said Lieutenant McDay that evening. "He has hinted to us in the Wing that you are a much better officer than any of us, and as your batman has gone to hospital to-day we are letting you have Majoma in his place. On your long journeys hither and thither in the Middle East you can exchange dreams with him to your heart's content."



"Rough or smooth?"

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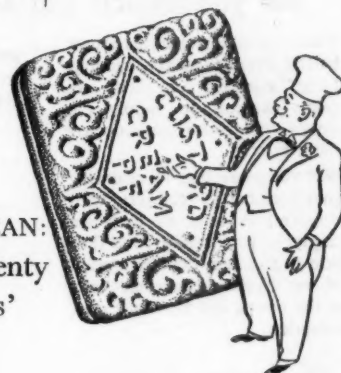
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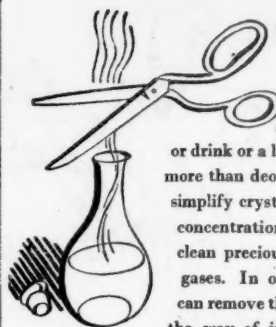
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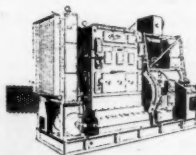
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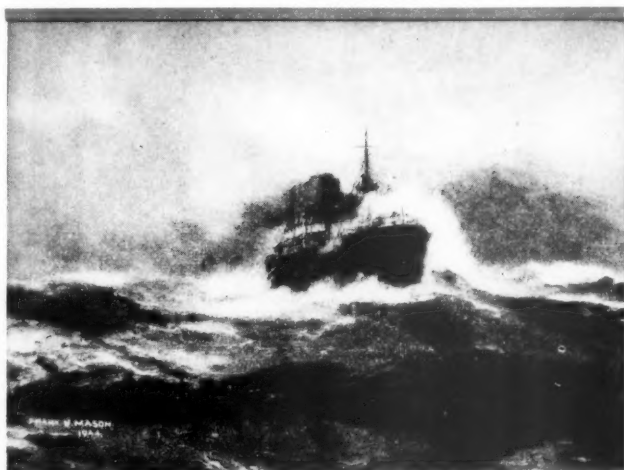


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